

Message Text

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43

ACTION EUR-25

INFO OCT-01 IO-14 ISO-00 DODE-00 AEC-11 CIAE-00 H-03

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY 8470

INFO AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY BRUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

USMISSION NATO

C O N F I D E N T I A L GENEVA 6075

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR

SUBJ: CSCE: ALLIED CONSULTATIONS ON BASKET III

1. SUMMARY. AT NATO DELEGATION HEADS CAUCUS SEPTEMBER 26, US REP (SHERER) AGAIN SUGGESTED THAT ALLIES DRAFT MORE REALISTIC TEXTS ON KEY BASKET III ISSUES. NINE PRESENTED PAPER PREPARED HERE AT DELEGATION LEVEL (TEXT SEPTTEL) COMMENTING ON FOUR US BASKET III TEXTS PUT FORWARD LAST JULY. MOST ALLIES ALSO SEEMED PREPARED TO BEGIN DRAFTING EXERCISE, BUT FRENCH SAID IT WAS PREMATURE. CAUCUS DECIDED MATTER SHOULD BE PURSUED IN BASKET III AND DELEGATION HEADS CAUSCUSES NEXT WEEK. AT SAME TIME, COMBINATION OF US URGING, SOVIET STONEWALLING, AND GROWING IMPATIENCE OF SOME SMALLER WESTERN COUNTRIES, ALLIED AND NEUTRAL, WITH CURRENT BASKET III IMPASSE
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IS BRINGING EC DELEGATIONS HERE TO RECOGNIZE THAT THEIR CURRENT POSITION MAY BE UNTENABLE.

THEY ARE BEGINNING TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO RETREAT GRACEFULLY AND HAVE SHOWN SOME INTEREST IN COMPROMISE APPROACH WHICH SWISS, NORWEGIANS AND OTHERS ARE PEDDLING IN THE CORRIDORS. WE ARE PRIVATELY ENCOURAGING SWISS AND NORWEGIANS, BUT ARE LYING VERY LOW ON THIS TO AVOID PROVOKING THE NINE. UNLESS OTHERWISE INSTRUCTED, WE INTEND TO KEEP MODERATE PRESSURE ON NINE TO TAKE MORE REALISTIC STANCE ON BASKET III, QUIETLY TO ENCOURAGE COMPROMISE EFFORTS, AND TO CONTINUE TO SUGGEST TO SOVIETS MORE PROCEDURAL FLEXIBILITY IN BASKET III, END SUMMARY.

2. AT SEPTEMBER 26 NATO CAUCUS, US REP (SHERER) WELCOMED EC NINE PAPER AS CONSTRUCTIVE STEP TOWARD BRIDGING DIFFERENCES, AND THEN REITERATED ARGUMENTS FOR WORKING TOWARD AGREED NATO LANGUAGE FOR MORE REALISTIC TEXTS COVERING THE CENTRAL BASKET III TOPICS. SHERER STRESSED THAT WE WERE ANXIOUS TO MAINTAIN A UNITED FRONT AMONG THE ALLIES IN CSCE. MOST OTHER DELEGATIONS WERE PREPARED TO ACCEPT OUR PROPOSAL FOR A DRAFTING EXERCISE OF THIS KIND, BUT FRENCH SAID IT WOULD BE PREMATURE. FRENCH VIEW WAS THAT DRAFTING OF MORE MODERATE TEXTS CAN TAKE PLACE ON ON TEXTS WHICH HAVE BEEN DISCUSSED IN CSCE. OTHER AMONG NINE THEN PEDALLED BACKWARDS. HOWEVER, ALL ARE ANXIOUS TO GET MORE UNITY AMONG THE 15 ON THIS ISSUE AND WANT TO CARRY ON THE DIALOGUE WITH US. IT WAS LEFT THAT ISSUE WOULD BE DISCUSSED IN NATO BASKET III CAUCUS NEXT TUESDAY AND THEN IN NATO DEL HEADS CAUCUS THURSDAY. WE PLAN TO TAKE UP MATTER PRIVATELY WITH FRENCH DEL HEAD HERE AND TO URGE MORE FLEXIBLE ATTITUDE TOWARDS US PROPOSAL.

3. EC NINE HAVE MADE PROCEDURAL CONCESSIONS (GENEVA 5977) TO PERSUADE SOVIETS TO BEGIN FIRST READING, BUT LATTER REFUSE EVEN TO DISCUSS CURRENT EC NINE TEXTS. HOWEVER, IT IS COMMON KNOWLEDGE AMONG ALL DELEGATIONS HERE THAT WE ARE URGING THE NINE TO TAKE MORE MODERATE POSTURE ON BASKET III. THIS IN TURN STIFFENS SOVIETS INTRANSIGENCE ON THE ISSUE, AND THE NINE ARE FULLY AND UNCOMFORTABLY AWARE OF THE EFFECT OF OUR POSITION ON THE SOVIET ATTITUDE. MEANWHILE, THE SWISS, NORWEGIANS AND OTHERS HAVE BEEN TELLING THE NINE BLUNTLY IN THE CORRIDORS
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THAT THEY WILL NEVER GET A FIRST READING ON BASKET III. THE SWISS AND NORWEGIANS ARE BEGINNING TO SOUND OUT OTHER DELEGATIONS ON A POSSIBLE COMPROMISE APPROACH TO THE CURRENT IMPASSE ON HUMAN CONTACTS (SEE BELOW). THE SOVIETS WILL SOON GET WIND OF THIS TOO, IF THEY ARE NOT ALREADY AWARE OF IT, AND THE KNOWLEDGE THAT A DEAL IS BREWING WILL ONLY CONFIRM THEIR BELIEF THAT THEY DO NOT HAVE TO AGREE TO A FIRST READING OF THE EC-NINE AND OTHER TEXTS PRESENTLY ON THE TABLE. FINALLY, IT IS ALSO WELL KNOWN HERE THAT THE NINE THEMSELVES ARE NOT FULLY UNITED BEHIND THEIR OWN BASKET III PROPOSALS. SEVERAL

OF THEIR DELEGATIONS, FOR EXAMPLE, ARE PRIVATELY SCORNFUL OF THE VERY LONG AND DETAILED EC-NINE (FRENCH) PAPER ON CULTURE.

4. IN LIGHT OF ALL THIS, EC-NINE DELEGATIONS ARE BEGINNING TO REALIZE THAT THEIR PRESENT POSITION OF INSISTING UPON A FIRST READING OF BASKET III TEXTS MAY NOT BE TENABLE. SOME OF THEM FEAR THAT THEIR OWN FOREIGN MINISTERS WILL BECOME IMPATIENT WITH THEIR CURRENT STANCE ON BASKET III WHEN IT BECOMES APPARENT THAT, IF THE NINE PERSIST, THE CONFERENCE WILL FACE PROLONGED DEADLOCK. SO THE NINE HERE ARE BEGINNING TO LOOK FOR WAYS TO FALL BACK GRACEFULLY. HOWEVER, THEIR CURRENT TACTIC (FIRST READING COVERING ALL BASKET III TEXTS TABLED HERE) WAS APPROVED AT THE RECENT EC FOREIGN MINISTERS' MEETING AND ANNOUNCED IN A PUBLIC COMMUNIQUE THEREAFTER. IT MAY, THEREFORE, TAKE SOME TIME FOR THEM TO REGROUP AND GET AUTHORITY FROM CAPITALS TO TRY A NEW TACK.

5. MEANWHILE, THE NINE ARE PLAINLY INTERESTED IN A PROPOSITION WHICH THE SWISS, WITH QUIET NORWEGIAN SUPPORT, ARE NOW PEDDLING IN THE CORRIDORS. THE IDEA IS TO BREAK THE CURRENT IMPASSE IN HUMAN CONTACTS WITH A SWISS COMPROMISE TEXT (YET TO BE DEVELOPED) THAT WOULD COVER ALL THE CONTENTIOUS ISSUES AND CONSTITUTE A PACKAGE DEAL. SUCH A PROPOSAL, IT IS HOPED, MIGHT IN EFFECT SUPERCEDE THE EC-NINE AND OTHER PAPERS ALREADY TABLED. BECAUSE IT WOULD BE NEW AND OF NEUTRAL ORIGIN, THE SOVIETS MIGHT BE BROUGHT TO DISCUSS IT. (IF THIS APPROACH WORKS UNDER THE HUMAN CONTACTS SUB-HEADING, IT MIGHT BE TRIED LATER FOR THE REMAINING BASKET III TOPICS.) WE ARE PRIVATELY ENCOURAGING THE SWISS AND NORWEGIANS TO PURSUE THEIR EFFORTS BUT ARE OTHERWISE TAKING A VERY LOW POSTURE. TOO MUCH US ENTHUSIASM FOR THIS PROJECT WOULD
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IRRITATE THE NINE AND PERHAPS MAKE IT HARDER FOR THEM ULTIMATELY TO ACCEPT IT. MEANWHILE, THE FRENCH (SPEAKING FOR THE NINE) HAVE TOLD THE SWISS THAT THEY DO NOT OBJECT IN PRINCIPLE TO THE FLOATING OF A PACKAGE DEAL BUT THAT THE SWISS SHOULD HOLD OFF FOR A COUPLE OF WEEKS.

6. IN THE DAYS AHEAD, WE PLAN TO KEEP NUDGING THE NINE TOWARD MORE REALISTIC POSITIONS ON BASKET III, WHILE RECOGNIZING THAT THEY WILL NEED TIME TO WORK OUT THE MECHANICS OF AN ORDERLY RETREAT. THE NINE WILL BE MORE AMENABLE TO OUR IDEAS IF WE CONTINUE TO JOIN THEM IN URGING SOVIETS TO ACCEPT MORE FLEXIBLE PROCEDURAL APPROACH IN BASKET III. DALE

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